

811 T.H. and case
W18 Jnd. Mills

Sam Merkle's Mill

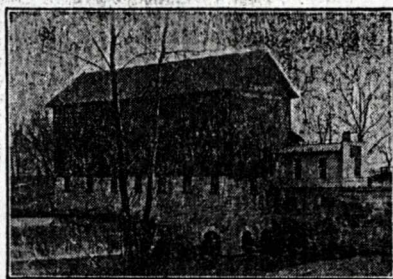
"THE OLD MILL"

OR

The Story Of a Rain Drop

BY

M. M. WANT



Emeline Fairbanks Mem. Library

ABRAHAM MARKLE was in Canada when the war of 1812 was declared. He deserted the British government, came to the United States, and was made a major in the American forces. At the close of the war he was given a tract of land—part of which Terre Haute now occupies—to reimburse him for his property which the British government had confiscated. As a Major in the U. S. Army he made his way west in 1815, locating his mill site on Otter Creek, six miles northeast of Terre Haute, then returned to the east and resigned his command. He returned again in 1816 and started to work on his mill. It was completed before 1818 as we have his book of that date, where he sold flour and meal and the commodities of that day and age. His death occurred on March 26, 1826.

C. D. HANSEL.

Emeline Fairbanks Mem. Library

"THE OLD MILL"

AS TOLD BY A DROP OF WATER.

I am only a drop of water,
But I've journeyed far and near,
And, what I have seen in my travels,
Perhaps you would like to hear.

Let me tell you then the story
Of the very oldest mill
In the State of Indiana,
Which I know is standing still.

In the year of 1815
I was journeying up from the sea,
Using the clouds for a carriage,
When a strange thing happened to me.

We ran into some counter currents
Of colder air one day;
Then the thunder began to rumble
And the lightning began to play;

I don't know what next did happen,
But there came a mighty spill:
In a torrent of rain I was dashing
Toward the slopes of a wooded hill.

A million of us drops of water
Which fell that day from the sky
Gathered quickly there on the hillside
And rushed down to a stream close by.

We thought we were alone in the forest
As down to the stream we ran,
But scarce had we joined its current
Till we saw on its shore a man.

Tall and straight, with rank of a major
As he stood on the bank that day
I saw a pioneer dreamer
And then hurried back on my way.

Through the streams of the primitive
forests
To my erstwhile home in the sea:
But I could not forget the major;
His spirit was calling to me.

So, again, with the clouds for a carriage,
A year later, I sought the stream
At the foot of the hill in the forest
Where this pioneer major I'd seen.

He too had gone and returned thither
A dam stretched across the stream.
It caught and held me a prisoner
So I watched him build his dream.

With rocks he laid the foundations.
Then I saw him hew each sill
And log and clapboard and puncheon
And the power wheel for his mill.

At last one day it was finished.
Just imagine how you would feel,
If you had watched it grow as I had,
When he opened the sluice to the wheel.

I was first to rush down the sluiceway
To help make that wheel go round.
And the noise which I heard with its
 moaning
Was to me a heavenly sound.

My joy broke forth into laughter
As I rushed out below the dam,
And looked back at the mill, the triumph
Of my glorious **Pioneer man.**

But now once again I was moving
On my journey back to the sea.
I scarcely can say I was happy
The mill pond was home now to me.

So again I took cloudway passage
And journeyed back to the land
Of the forest hill and the mill-pond
And the mill of my **Pioneer man.**

But this time I misjudged the distance
And when I now made my drop,
I landed instead in a clearing,
In the midst of a growing crop.

I was caught on the leaf of a cornstalk
And transferred to the growing ear:
Imprisoned there in its kernels
I felt that my end was near.

But I lived on and saw the hardships
Of that early pioneer band
As they builded their homes in the forest
And fought the treacherous red man.

At last came the day of the harvest,
I journeyed once more down the hill
In the grist of my farmer owner
And came again to the mill.

And then I went into the hopper.
I was crushed between the stones.
Then I married my **Pioneer Dreamer.**
I became part of his flesh and his bones.

Imprisoned, unknown and unnoticed,
As part of him, I rejoiced still
At the triumphs of my Major,
Who builded the old water mill.

I'll not tell you all of the story.
Unto him my life I gave,
Till, at last, my pioneer lover
Was laid away in the grave.

Then, released, I took up my journey
Again outward toward the sea.
But the old mill there in the forest
And its mill pond are home to me.

My vision became misty with longing
The clouds once again were my friends
And carried me back to the hillside
Along which the mill stream wends.

Once again I missed my landing,
Down thru the darkness I sunk,
Till I came ,after what seemed ages,
To the pool of a coal mine sump.

Then up through a pump to the surface
And down through a filthy drain,
After devious windings and turnings,
To the dear old mill pond again.

What a change had come in my absence
The hill was a beautiful park;
And everywhere lights electric
Made daylight out of the dark.

The onmarch of civilization
Had caught up with my Pioneer man
And made a place of recreation
Of the hill where the millstream ran.

A great city had grown up on the river,
Into which the millstream ran,
Which knew how to love and to cherish
The mill of my Pioneer man.

Of course I found a new owner
Now had the old mill in charge;
And he is a poet dreamer
Whose heart is warm and large.

True he has neither meeter nor rhythm,
But this story was in his heart.
I have but loaned him the meeter
And rhythm as my humble part.

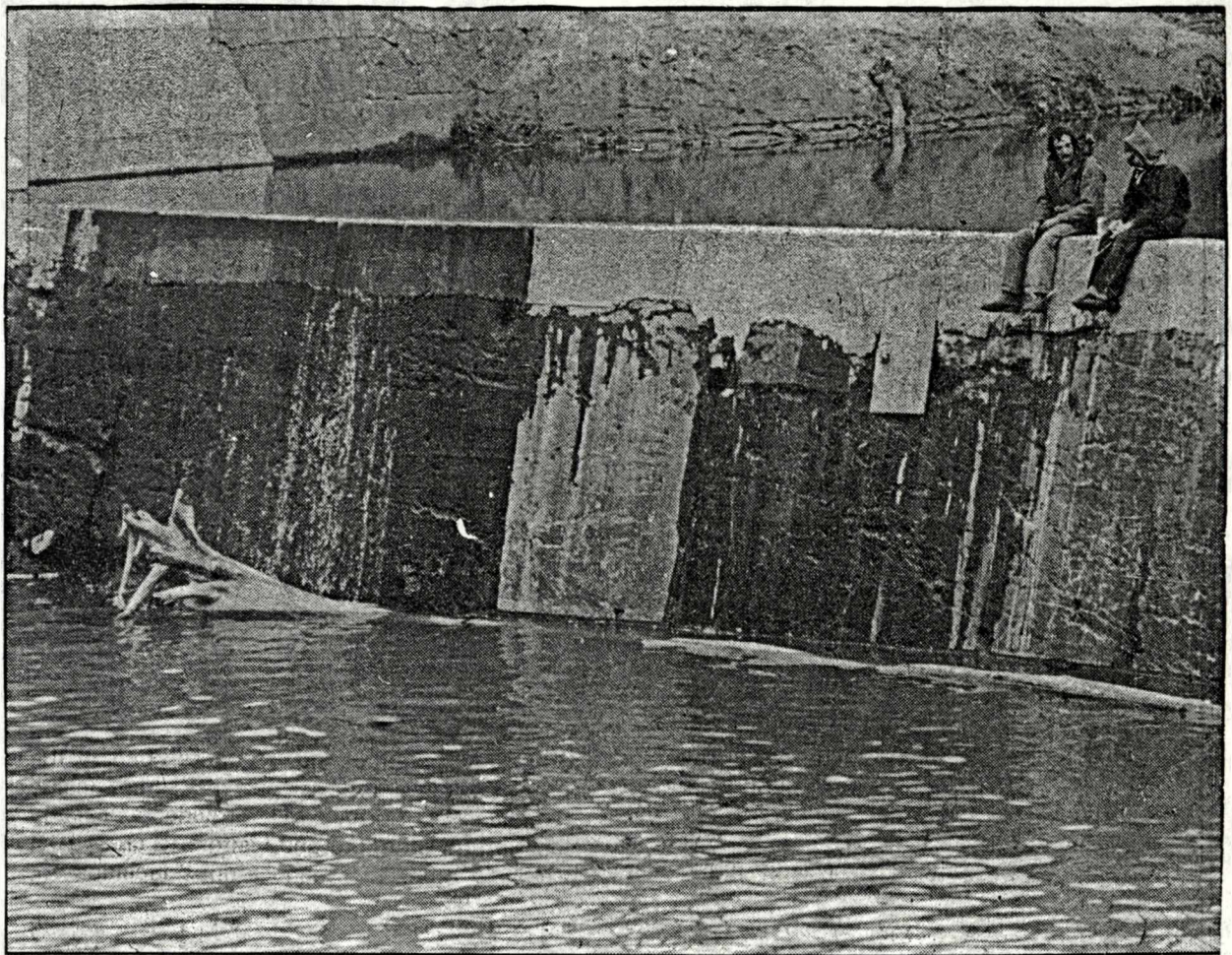
Yes, I've settled again the millpond,
While others now turn the wheel.
I shall stay with this poet miller
Thru his life, for woe or weal.

ALWAYS USE
O. C. PATENT FLOUR
AND
O. C. MEAL
AND HELP KEEP THE
OLD MILL RUNNING.



C. D. HANSEL
North Terre Haute, Indiana

Herald Printing Co.
December 1931



Fighting the rain

Tribune-Star/Bob Poynter

4-22-84
Sunday

Two "game" fishermen get in a few licks between rain storms at Mill Dam north of Terre Haute. Only fish could enjoy the abundance of fresh water holiday weekend.

that is falling in the Wabash Valley area this

MARKLE/HANSEL MILL

Built in 1816

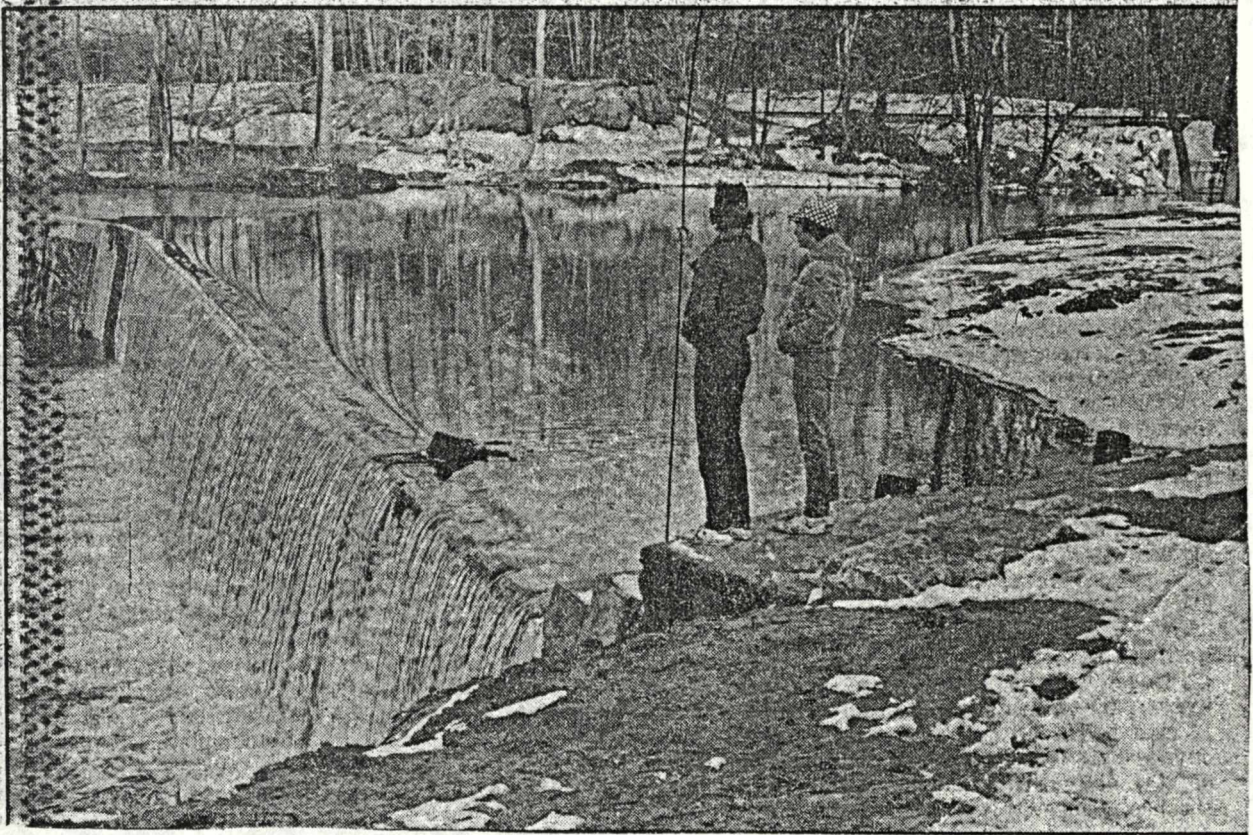
tee.



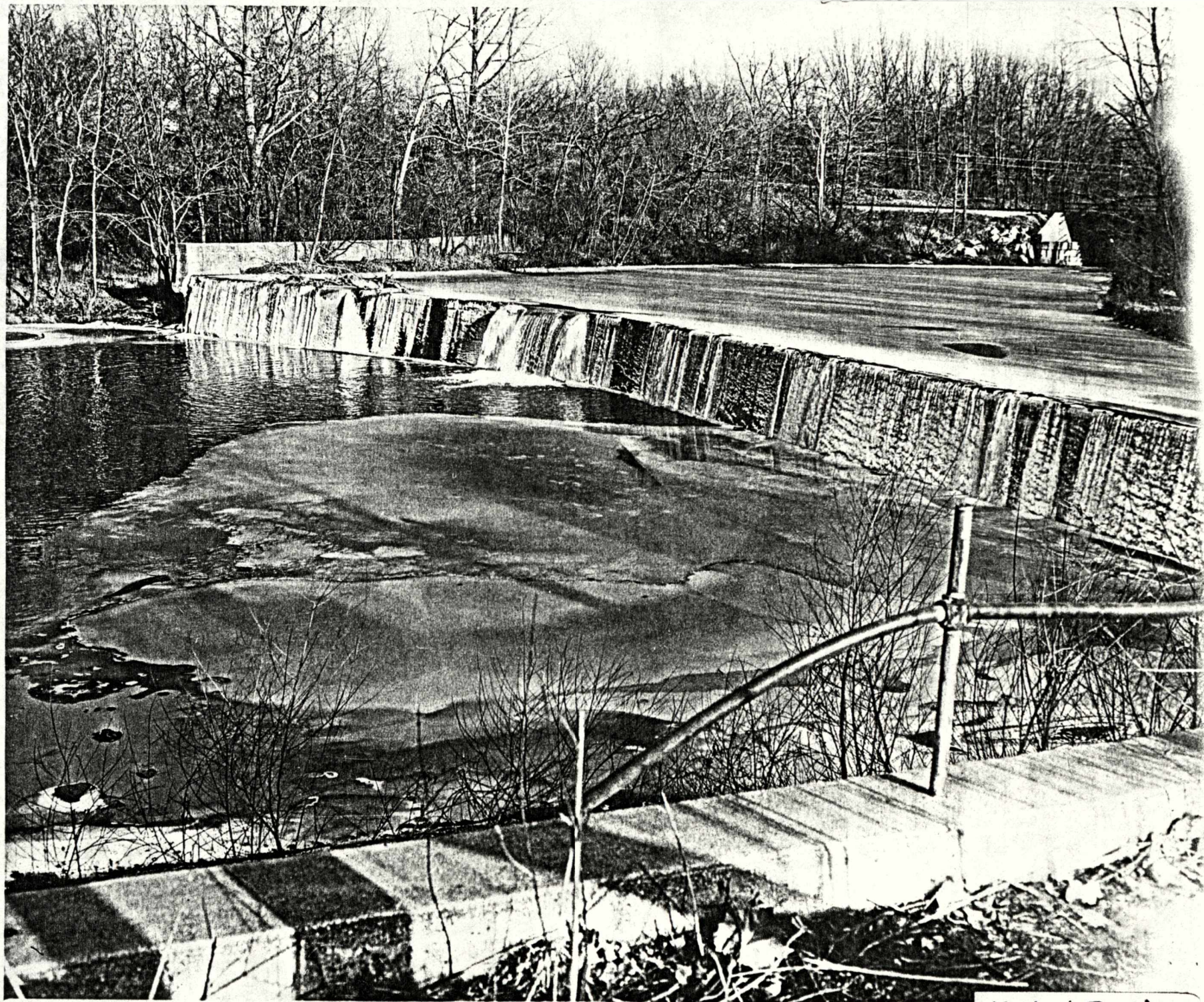
BEAUTY
BLEAK RUINS MARK AN ERSTWHIL built in 1816,
SPOT—How the ruins of the Hansel Mill
look these wintry days.

ALSO SEE: MILLS (IND)
Markle Mills

Metro



Archives 6A4



Mills (Ind.)

Pioneer life centered around grist mills

By Dorothy J. Clark

Historically speaking

In pioneer Indiana, towns grew up around a grist mill. No matter what the economy might have been, the grist mill was a necessity. Farmers traveled from miles around to have their grain ground at the mill. Along with the crossroads, the tavern, the ford or bridge, the mill became the rallying point for a widely scattered population.

There were many towns with "mill" in their names, or the surname of the miller. Major Abraham Markle, early settler and one of the town proprietors of Terre Haute, is still remembered for his mill on Otter Creek in northern Vigo County.

A successful miller in northern New York and Canada, he selected his mill site east of Fort Harrison. In that day, water mills used either undershot or overshot wheels. Near a vigorously flowing stream, a dam was constructed and the water's flow was channeled through a wooden millrace, rushing against the wheel at either the top or the bottom and back down the flume.

Markle's Mill was constructed of stone for added strength. As the mill prospered, a saw mill was added, along with a blacksmith shop, distillery and general store.

The blacksmith was a one man factory in his own right, as well as a repairer of a wide variety of pioneer implements. He made nails and horseshoes for a starter, but he also fashioned chains, tires, rephooks, bullet molds, yoke rings, axles, animal traps, files, shears, locks, keys, adzes, plowshares, hackle teeth, bits, saws, and the metal parts of a variety of implements for home and farming such as spinning wheels, looms and flails.

Expert smiths made axes and guns. If they added equipment, they could make stoves, skillets, pots and pans. The smith imported soft bar iron or cast steel from Pittsburgh or Europe. Local iron and coal deposits would supply nearby smiths in later years, but early supplies had to come from Ohio's abundant deposits.

As the farmer's acreage in corn increased, he found it was desirable and profitable to trade bushels of corn for jugs of whiskey, so the still was in operation at Markle's Mill,

and the old account books show the whiskey transactions.

Since Markle was one of the Terre Haute founders, he had no interest in encouraging a town to grow up around his mill site. He urged settlers to buy lots and settle in the growing little town located on the river bank southwest of the mill.

Markle's Mill was a stop on the stage coach route to the north, and served as a meeting place for the home guard's regular drill practices on muster day.

The general store was the social center where loungers, gossipers, mail readers and political speakers gathered. Every male customer was invited to the back room where the ever-present barrel of whiskey along with the pitcher of water, maple sugar, and a tumbler of ginger in cold weather, was offered as hospitality and a sort of grease to the wheels of commerce.

A long counter of boards sawed at the mill stretched the length of the store room. There were displays of sale goods — bolts of calico, pins and needles, tobacco, tea, coffee and a myriad of items the pioneers could not produce on their little farms. Markle's Mill did a brisk business in mourning garments and winding sheets in its earliest days before undertakers.

The odor of the early little general stores was difficult to describe. Unwashed pioneer bodies, along with the smell of drying herbs, open barrels and crates of every kind of merchandise, the hides brought in for barter giving off an aroma never

to be forgotten, the smell of new cloth, and the sharp tang of the rat-trap cheese round, the molasses, etc., all these made up the special smell of a country store, and each was different and changed with the season and the newest merchandise to be opened.

Major Markle died in 1826 at the early age of 56 years, so he did not live long enough to see the growth of Terre Haute and the slow demise of his mill. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1938, and only the foundation stones and dam remain.

According to John Weber of rural Brazil, there were at least two other water mills on Otter Creek. One was located in Clay County a mile north of Cloverland on the south branch of Otter Creek, (then known as McBride's Creek). This saw mill was built and operated by William McBride from 1834 to 1850. The dam washed out and steam mills came in about that time, so it was never rebuilt.

Another water mill on Otter Creek was the first saw mill in Posey Township, Clay County, built by John Huffman soon after his arrival in 1828. It stood near the northern boundary of Cloverland.

This mill did a very brisk business furnishing lumber for most of the early construction at Cloverland and Williamstown. Weber recalled this saw mill was located east of the Otter Creek Church, down the hill to where the road turns north across the creek and east of the bridge upstream. The mill was rebuilt in 1839 by Wallace and Brooks and became steam powered.

Weber's great-grandfather, Oliver H. Smith, came to Cloverland with two brothers; two brothers-in-law, William and John McBride; John Brown; and a Mr. Davis in 1832. He helped organize Cloverland and Posey Township, Clay County, Ind.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library

Dam committee moves Otter Creek

The newly formed "Committee to Save Mill Dam Project" met last Wednesday to elect officers and discuss plans to divert Otter Creek in order to repair the dam. Diversion of Otter Creek was accomplished Saturday and Sunday and debris was removed.

Cement, form boards, rebar, equipment, money, paint, barrels, food, insurance and labor were donated by several area firms. Capping begins this weekend.

Nick Peters was elected president; Eldora Brown, secretary; Jess Williams and Gary Brandenburg, co-treasurers; Cecil Brown, William Fawley and Woody Grindle, supervisors for construction; Candace Shoaf, appropriations, and Art Royer, assistant; Ruby Stableton, food chairman, and Beverly Williams, co-chairman; and John Hanna, publicity.

Terre Haute First National Bank, represented by David Ballinger, is trustee of all funds.

The committee meets at 7:30 p.m. today in the Sandcut firehouse.

Group Plans Preservation of Mill Dam

by Benjamin Dailey

In the eastern part of Otter Creek Township lies one of the most historic landmarks of this state, Markle's mill dam. Since the burning of the mill in 1938, the dam has fallen into disrepair. Physical abuse by both vandals and weather have caused a great deal of damage in the last 10 years. The Committee for the Preservation of Historic Markle Mill Dam, and EXP '83, a High Adventure Explorer Post from Terre Haute North High School, with the support of the Northside Breakfast Optimist Club, intend to stop further deterioration of the dam and to make repairs to the dam and retaining wall. Reconstruction of the mill is a possibility!

There are many reasons for saving this dam. The historic value is obvious. During the last 160 years the dam has created an ecology upstream which is dependent on the water table remaining at the present level. Also, the wilderness east of the dam is on the flight path of some migratory birds. A lowering of the water level might change the vegetation which will result in the loss of food for wildlife.

The site for Markle's Mill was located in 1815 or 1816 by Major Abraham Markle. Construction began in 1816.

The mill began producing flour in 1817 and worked without major interruptions until 1938, when it burned. The majestic Markle house, now owned by the Vigo County Historical Society, was built in 1848.

The mill and home served as a station on the Underground Railroad, helping slaves escape to the North and Canada, as a community center, and as a recruiting station in the Civil War. They have served as a meeting place for the "Home Guard"

during the Civil War and as a Way Station for stage coach lines.

Anyone wishing to help in this worthwhile project may do so in several ways. The committee is seeking people who:

1. Remember the mill when it was in operation (they would like to interview them).
2. has photographs of the mill or surrounding area which might be useful in the reconstruction of the mill (all photos will be returned to the original owner after copying).
3. Has historical information relating to the mill or surrounding area.
4. Has any momentos of the dam. There may be some flour sacks still around printed with "O. C. Flour or O. C. Mill". Photos of flour sacks are needed for records.
5. Has stories or "tall tales" related to the mill or area (The Committee would like to interview these people and record their stories for a book. Credit for each story will be given.)
6. Wish to donate equipment, labor, or expertise to the effort.
7. Wish to donate money to the effort.

Anyone who can support the committee in any way is asked to contact Dale Newton or Ben Dailey, Terre Haute North High School, 3434 Maple Avenue, Terre Haute, Indiana 47804.

Vigo County Public Library

DO NOT
CIRCULATE
REFERENCE

Community Affairs File

Mills(Ind)

~~Historic Landmark~~

Community Affairs File

Volunteers seek to fortify weakened Markle's Mill Dam

Ts MAR 6 1983

By DONNA CHRISTENBERRY
Tribune-Star Staff Writer

A new lease on life is becoming a reality for the Markle's Mill Dam.

Volunteers began to sandbag Saturday morning to relieve pressure on the dam as a prelude to further work in the area.

A break in the retaining wall last year caused considerable damage. Without attention the dam might not have lasted until spring, said Dale Newton, one of the Committee for the Preservation of Historic Markle Mill Dam members working on the project.

Along with the committee and the support of the Northside Breakfast Optimist Club, the 40 members of North Vigo's High Adventure Explorer Post are working on the project.

Work began in November. Picks and shovels were used to dig around the dam and redirect the creek to relieve pressure. State officials have given the go-ahead on the project to save the historic structure.

Plans call for rebuilding the retaining wall after the sandbagging and recapping the dam. By the end of summer, once the area is drained and a new gate supplied, Newton said a pond could exist where it had formerly.

Benjamin Dailey, another member of the committee, said that during the last 160 years the dam has

created an ecology upstream dependent on current water level. The area east of the dam is on the flight path of some migratory birds.

The dam fell into disrepair following the burning of the mill in 1938. The mill was constructed by Major Abraham Markle in 1816 and produced flour until the fire. Vandals and weather have taken an especially heavy toll on the dam in the last 10 years.

The nearby Markle House was built in 1848.

Committee members are seeking information about the mill and dam for a book they hope to write.

They are looking for:

- People who remember the mill in operation.
- People who have pictures of the mill or surrounding area which might be useful in a possible reconstruction of the mill.
- People who have historical information about the area.
- Mementos of the dam or flour sacks with "O.C. Flour" or "O.C. Mill."
- People who have "tall tales" related to the mill or area.

The group also welcomes donations of equipment, labor, expertise, or money to the rebuilding or the book project. Contact Newton or Bailey at North Vigo High School, 3434 Maple Ave., Terre Haute, Ind. 47804.

Vigo County Public Library

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

S DEC 11 1982

Historic Landmarks (VC) Community Affairs File

North Vigo adventure club repairing county landmark

By **ABBY BEARD,**
AMY SAMPSON

North Vigo High School

Members of the EXP '83 Club at North Vigo High School have undertaken a challenging project of repairing the county's Markle Mill Dam.

Don Duncan, counselor at North Vigo, who resides in the dam area, first became concerned about the dam. The need for repair work was brought to the attention of Dale Newton, business teacher and sponsor of the EXP '83 Club. Newton attributes the idea for the project to Duncan.

EXP '83 is an adventure club, concentrating on challenging out of the ordinary activities. Conservation, ecology and outdoor sports are the focus of the club. Newton commented about the Markle Mill Dam project, saying, "This was ideal."

Built in 1816 by Colonel Markle, the dam is the oldest one west of the Appalachian's. It sustains a wildlife preserve, and is a part of the flight path of a flock of migratory birds.

Standing 10 feet high, the dam holds the

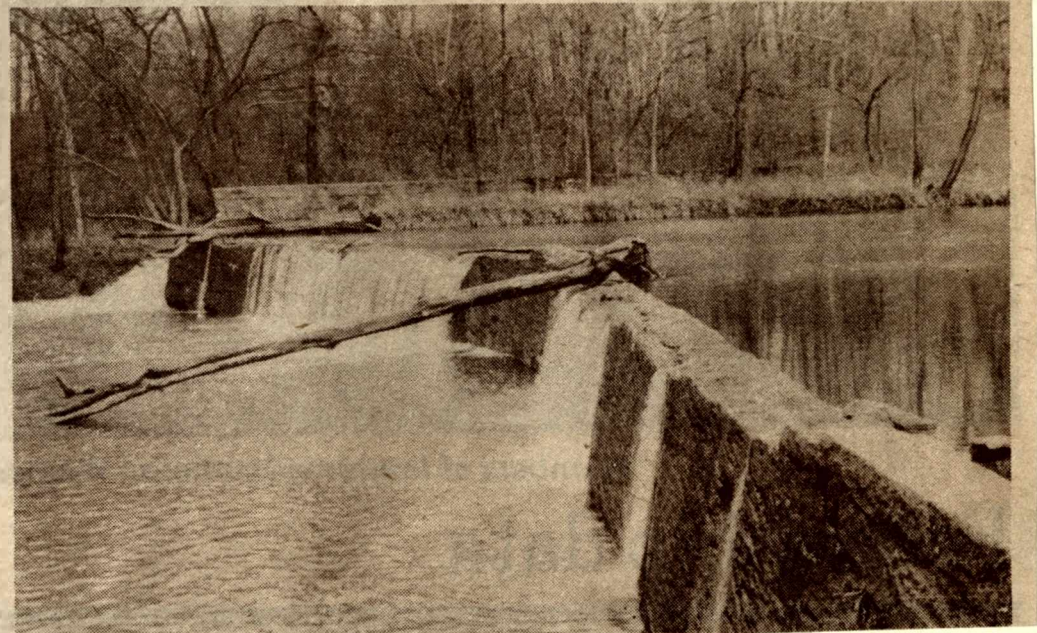
water table up all the way down the river. If the crumbling of the dam continues, Vigo County will eventually lose the dam.

After receiving permission from various trustees and commissioners, the EXP '83 Club began to repair the dam. Work involves rerouting the water path by digging out the old route the water used to follow before the mill burned down.

The east end of the dam has crumbled and the water flows through the east end and over the top, at present. Eventually, the club wants to repair the east end of the dam.

Newton is being assisted by Duncan, Rick Stephens, a North teacher, and Ben Daily, also on the North faculty, whom Newton calls the "general superintendent" of the project. Dr. Walt Wojak also is being consulted about the project.

One of the next projects slated for EXP '83 involves clearing driftwood out of Otter Creek in order to make it passable for canoers. Also in the planning stage, are lengthy biking trips, skiing and other outdoor challenges.



Patriots working hard

REFERENCE
CIRCULATE
Vigo County Public Library



Staff Photo/Jim Avelis

North High School Explorers work to strengthen Markle's Mill Dam.



MILL DAM COMMITTEE NOW INCORPORATED

Macksville Gazette 3/30/83

The Committee for the Preservation of Historic Markle's Mill Dam has filed articles of incorporation with the State of Indiana and is now accepting tax exempt donations.

Benjamin Dailey, spokesman for the group, says that an estimated \$7000 will be needed for this summer's work. Funds will be needed to purchase concrete and form materials for the dam and retaining wall; the placement of grout curtains and landscaping on the north shore; and tuckpointing of the mill foundation.

Donations of money, labor, and/or materials will be gladly accepted by the group which hopes to preserve the mill dam and prevent further deterioration. Long range plans call for possibly restoring the mill at its original site if funds and labor are available.

To make donations or for further information about the project, contact the committee at 3434 Maple Avenue, Terre Haute, IN 47804, or call Ben Dailey (234-1077) or Dale Newton (533-1811).

Martin Photo from the Pat Calvert Collection.

Mills (Ind) Historic Landmarks

(T.H.)
Community Affairs File

Vigo County Public Library

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

TS OCT 2 1983

Historic Landmark (G.A.)

Volunteers tackle restoration effort to save Mill Dam

Community Affairs File

Mills (Incl.)

By Jan Chait
Tribune-Star Staff Reporter

About 30 to 35 persons put in a full day Saturday working on the restoration of Mill Dam.

Gary Brandenburg, co-treasurer of the Committee to Restore Mill Dam Project, said volunteers worked on rerouting water in the creek, moved dirt to form an access road for a cement truck, inserted some steel bars in the dam and cleaned up part of the east side of the dam.

Brandenburg explained that the middle portion of the dam is gone as are the flood gates. In addition, the top of the dam needs recapped.

"It's something that's been there for years, is deteriorating, and needs to be restored so other people can enjoy it," said Brandenburg, a city police officer.

Workers will insert more 3/4-inch steel bars into the sides of the dam and lay wood forms today so concrete can be poured Monday if all goes well.

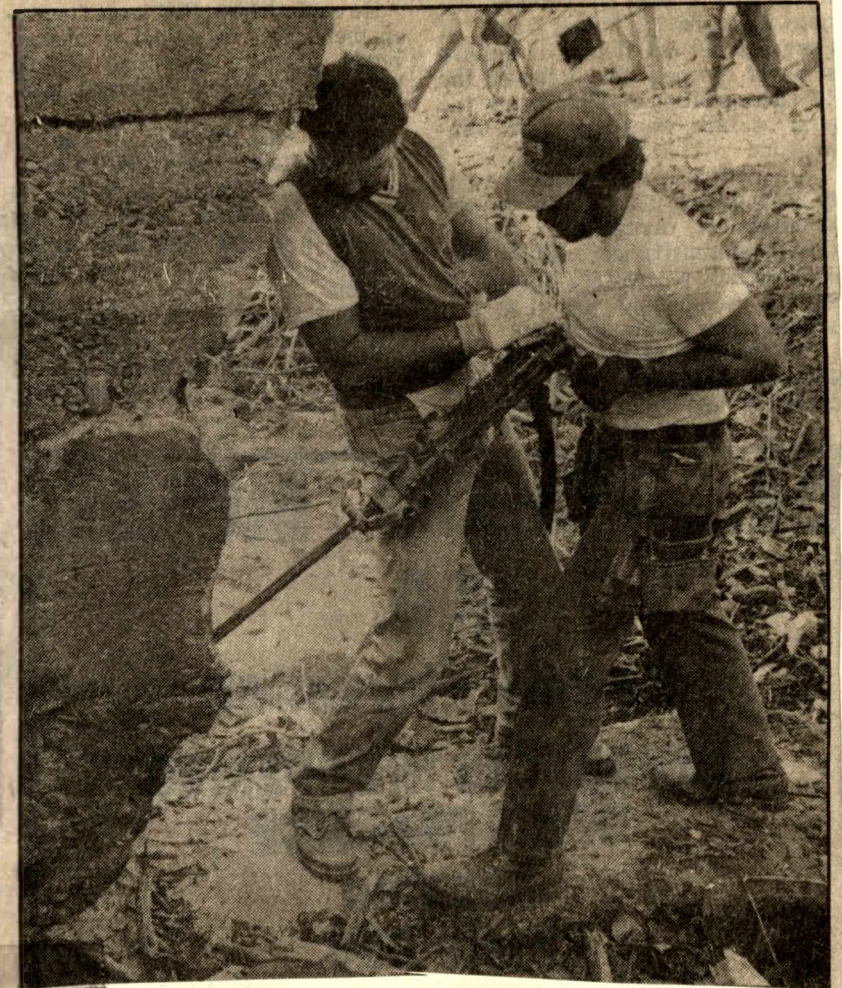
Construction workers, iron workers, even a banker, are working on the project on a voluntary basis with donated supplies, money and equipment, Brandenburg said.

"There's an old man who comes down every day and watches. He's not able to work (but) he donated \$100."

J.I. Case supplied four payloaders complete with operators to help with the project and one worker, Dave Lawrence, brought along a backhoe.

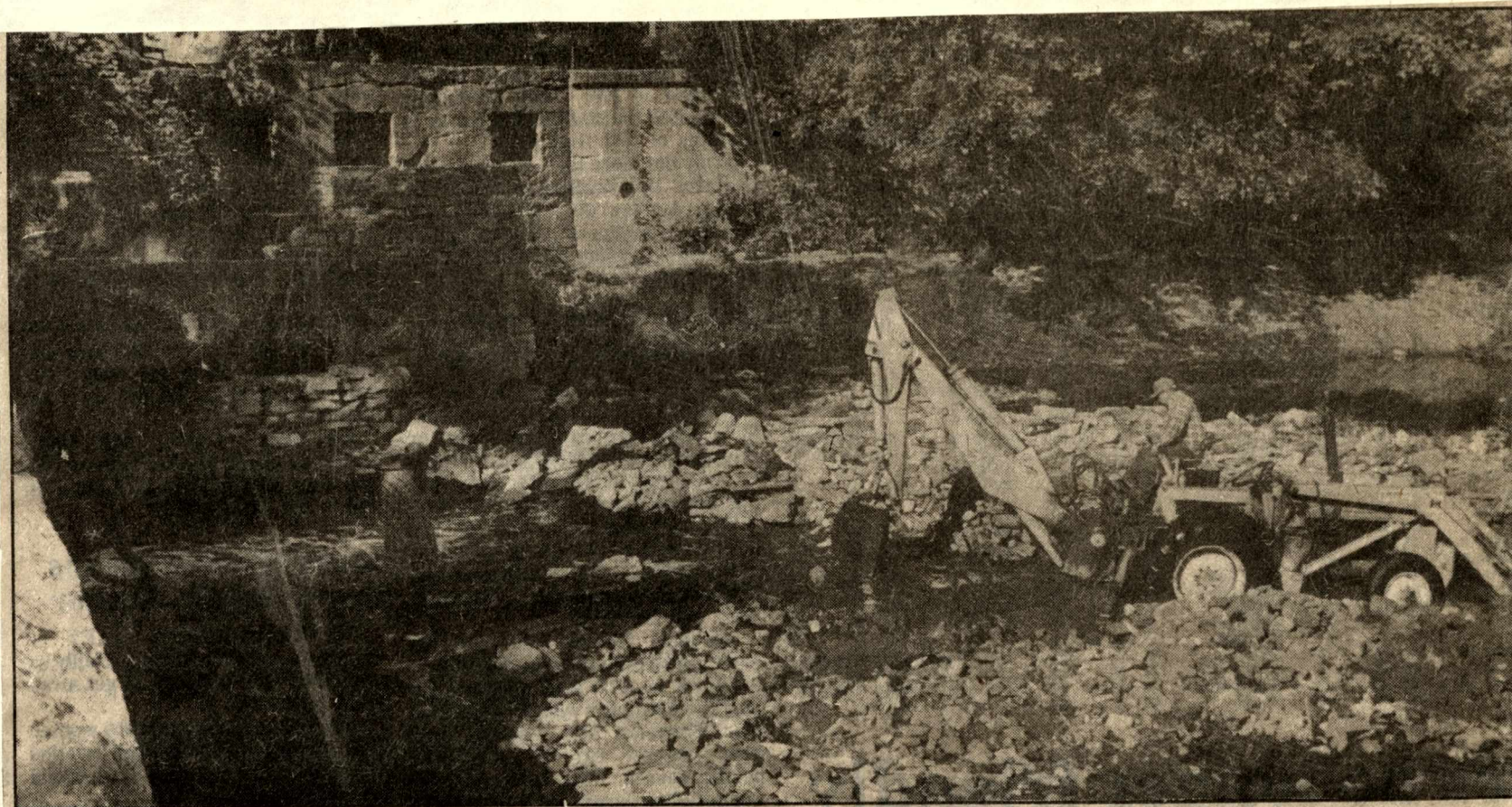
Other donations of equipment, supplies and food have come from a number of area firms, Brandenburg said.

The dam is on Park Avenue about a mile east of Lafayette Avenue.



REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library



Dam restoration

Tribune-Star/Randy Prophet

Gary Brandenburg (in the shadows) watches as Dave Lawrence operates a backhoe at Mill Dam Saturday (photo above). (Photo below, right) David Brown and Tim Malooley drill a hole so a steel bar can be inserted into a portion of the dam. Brandenburg said he anticipates it will be at least three more weeks before volunteers complete their work on the dam.

Markle's Mill Dam

Historic Landmarks
TERRE HAUTE *Fast* NATIONAL BANK
introduces you to **MARKLE'S MILL DAM**
APR 22 1988

In the eastern part of Otter Creek Township lies one of the most historic landmarks of this state, Markle's Mill Dam.

In pioneer Indiana towns grew up around a grist mill. No matter what the economy might have been, the grist mill was a necessity. Farmers traveled from miles around to have their grain ground at the mill. Along with the crossroads, the tavern, the ford or bridge, the mill became the rallying point for a widely scattered population.

A successful miller in northern New York and Canada, Major Abraham Markle selected his mill site east of Fort Harrison in 1816. Since Markle was one of Terre Haute's founders, he urged settlers to buy lots and settle in the growing little town located on the river bank southwest of the mill.

Markle chose the mill site on Otter Creek because of the rocky bottom of the creek. This proved to be a contributing factor to the stability of the structure. Mills built earlier on sandy bottoms were doomed to be washed away by floods and high waters.

Markle's mill was constructed of stone for added strength. As the mill prospered a saw mill was added, along with a blacksmith shop, distillery, and general store. The mill began producing flour in 1817, and in 1848 the majestic Markle House was built.

Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

obtained flour actually produced from wheat he brought to the mill.

Markle's sons and a grandson operated the mill for many years until it was sold to a man named Creal, of Burnett. Later a man by the name of Welch bought the mill, and in 1911 C.D. Hansel leased the mill and later purchased it.

Major Markle died in 1826 at the early age of 56, so he did not live long enough to see the growth of Terre Haute and what was to become the slow demise of his mill. In 1938 a devastating fire destroyed the mill as it was known then. At the time Markle's mill was the oldest mill west of the Allegheny Mountains still in operation. Later vandalism and weather took an especially heavy toll on the dam.

In 1983 Markle's mill dam was the object of a restoration effort. Students at Terre Haute North High School saw the need for repair. Standing ten feet high, the dam held the water table up all the way down the river. If the crumbling of the dam continued, Vigo County would eventually lose the dam. Restoration work involved re-routing the water path by digging out the old route the water used to follow before the mill burned down.

In its existence the dam has created an ecology upstream dependent on current water level. It sustained a wild-life preserve. The area east of the dam is on the flight path of some migratory birds. Reasons for saving Markle's dam were obvious, as a lowering of the water level might change the vegetation which would result in the loss of food for wildlife.

Markle's mill dam is located on Park Avenue about a mile east of Lafayette Avenue in northeastern Vigo County. Today only parts of the foundation of the mill remain and a park is maintained at the mill site by Otter Creek Township.

The mill and home served as a station on the Underground railroad, helping slaves escape to the North and Canada, as a community center, and as a recruiting station in the Civil War. They served as a meeting place for the "Home Guard" during the Civil War and as weigh station for stage coach lines.

From the earliest times Markle's mill and other early water-powered mills were regarded as public utilities and were rigidly regulated as to terms and prices. Elaborate pains were taken in those days to insure that a customer

Valley Viewpoint

What would you like to see done with the Mill Dam area?

Jess Williams, North Terre Haute
"Restored back to its original condition."



Vera Taylor, Terre Haute
"Have it fixed up for the kids and into a good picnic area."



Candice Shoaf, North Terre Haute
"A nice park with playground equipment. A place for families and children to enjoy themselves."

Nick Peters, Terre Haute
"Make it a recreation area for kids."



Beverly Williams, North Terre Haute
"I'd like to see playground equipment and a shelter."



Stanley Shoaf, North Terre Haute
"Complete restoration of the whole dam and mill."

Markle's Mill

Historic Landmarks (W) - Markle's Mill

Nose to the grindstone

Markles made milling their business

NOV 20 1988

Terre Haute's history always has been associated with Markle's Mill. After all, the mill's builder, Abraham Markle, was one of the town proprietors.

Probably the first use of the mill was to get out lumber for the old house, the first frame house in this and adjoining counties. The original record books show in detail the transactions, even to the accounting of the material used in the mill — the first house on the east side of the road — and such lumber as went into other houses built in the area.

At the close of the list of lumber that went into the house was a note added some years later by Frederick Markle, who handled the mill after his father's death in 1826. It said, "Moved in the day that Sarah came."

Sarah had married James Pettingill in 1812 in New York, and a land entry here was made in 1817 which shows that they were here in the spring of 1817, so that the house was evidently finished by that time.

The mill ran that winter under a roof, but no other shelter. Besides grinding flour and cornmeal, the mill operated as a distillery, although there were no sales in barrels noted until the summer of 1817 when grain and whiskey were shipped to New Orleans in at least one flat boat.

In later years several boats went in a fleet, and trade with shippers from that port continued until as late as the 1870s, though it is probable that the flatboat trade had ceased by then.

Historically speaking



Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

Many of the items in the old books showed barter rather than sales. Money in the early days was scarce.

The law fixed the price to be paid the miller, and as most of the grinding was custom work, the toll was taken in either flour, meal or grain. From a "struck bushel" of wheat the miller took a half peck; from a peck measure of flour or meal he had a "toll dish" that held a quart. That was his lawful toll for the grinding.

The law also required that the customer should have his own wheat ground and not mixed with that of others. Buckwheat or other grain was threshed with a flail, a long stick to the end of which a shorter one was attached by a thong. A skillful user could do a lot of work, but the unskilled had to be careful that he missed his head.

A large amount often was spread on the threshing floor, and the grain worked out by oxen. In such cases it was necessary to take

sanitary precautions, and the grower had no desire to have his grain ground with others who might not have been so careful to avoid accident.

Even in the earliest days when every one raised more than he could use and there was little market for the surplus, the miller soon accumulated both grain and the finished product. As early as 1830, wheat was being hauled to Chicago for shipment or sale.

About that time, Henry Markle and his brother, Nelson Markle, were operating a stage line to Lafayette. Abraham Jr. was stationed at Kankakee for a while. The stage line went through Attica and Nelson lived there for nearly 20 years. The late A.R. Markle's father was born in 1842 at Rob Roy, then a prosperous town, some five or more miles south of Attica.

Nelson Markle also was a miller, and in 1850 he left Rob Roy to move to the hill this side of Brazil where he ran a tavern opposite the Cottage Hill Cemetery for a few years. Tiring of that and with an urge to get back into milling, he moved to Bowling Green where he had a mill on Jordan Creek. This explains A.R. Markle's birthplace in Clay County, Ind.

From earliest days the Markles balanced the books yearly, and some of the entries show the care taken to close the account either by cash or other means. One entry showed a balance due and a cross entry: "A widow, her last son fell at Antietam."

Another, not so merciful,

balances with the terse comment: "A rascal. I'll never trust him again." A few transactions during the Civil War were paid in gold, but the greater part were settled with "greenbacks" at a heavy discount or the price of flour selling at as much as \$7 a barrel.

With the advent of the Wabash & Erie Canal, some business went to the east by Lake Erie and Buffalo or even farther by the Erie Canal to New York. After the coming of the railroad, shipments went faster, as many as 400 barrels of flour in a single shipment.

The first dam was in a slightly different location, and the mill also, but after the close of the Civil War, the mill was torn down, piece by piece, and a portion added on the east end. Each timber was carefully marked with its location in the structure. In the rebuilding, all of the original timbers that weren't in good condition were replaced. The original timbers were hewed, while the new part and replacements were sawed. Until its destruction, by fire in September 1938, the distinction was plainly visible.

The flood of 1875 washed out around the north end of the dam and shut down the mill for some time. When the mill was restored to activity, there came the opposite problem. For four months there was not enough water to operate at all.

In later years the dam was replaced by concrete, and when a drought prevented operation again, a gas engine was installed which operated until the mill's end.

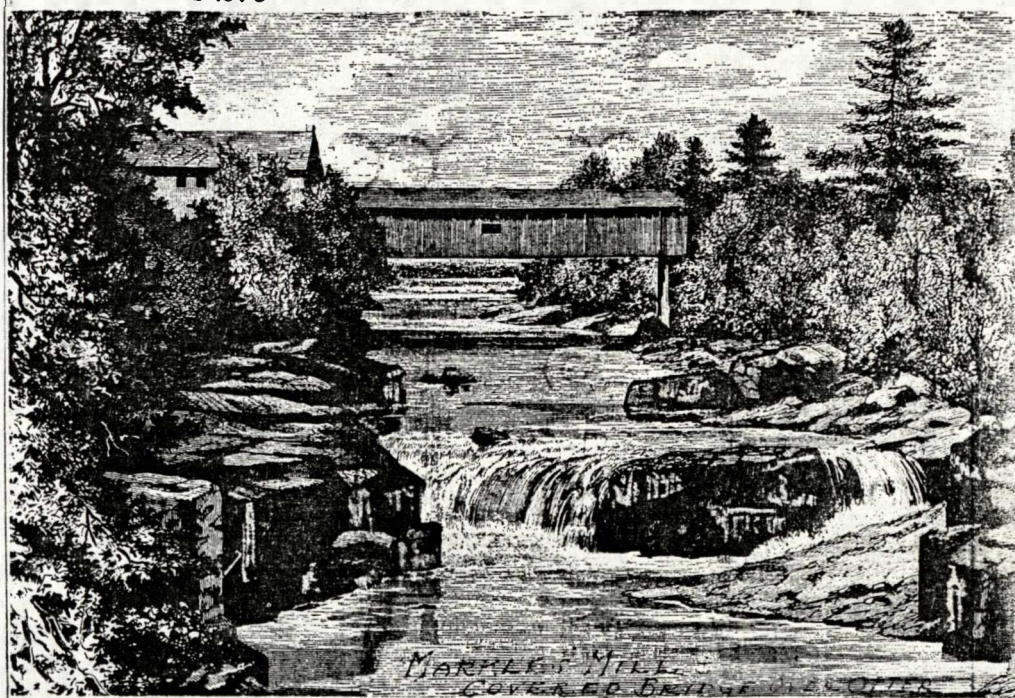
Vigo County Public Library
Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Markle's Mill
Covered Bridge

T OCT 11 1973

Community Affairs Fi



FAMILIAR LANDMARK to early settlers in this area was Markle's Mill and covered bridge, built in 1816 over Otter Creek, on what is now the Rosedale Road. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1938, and the old covered bridge at that site was replaced by an iron bridge nearly a century ago. Drawings and photographs of the historic covered bridge have been sought for years by the Vigo County Historical Society without success until this pen and ink drawing was found by Mr. Shuvert Sehree and presented to the Historical Museum where it can be seen daily, 1 to 4 p.m., Sunday through Friday. There is no admission charge at the Historical Museum, 1411 S. 6th St.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Mills (Ind.)

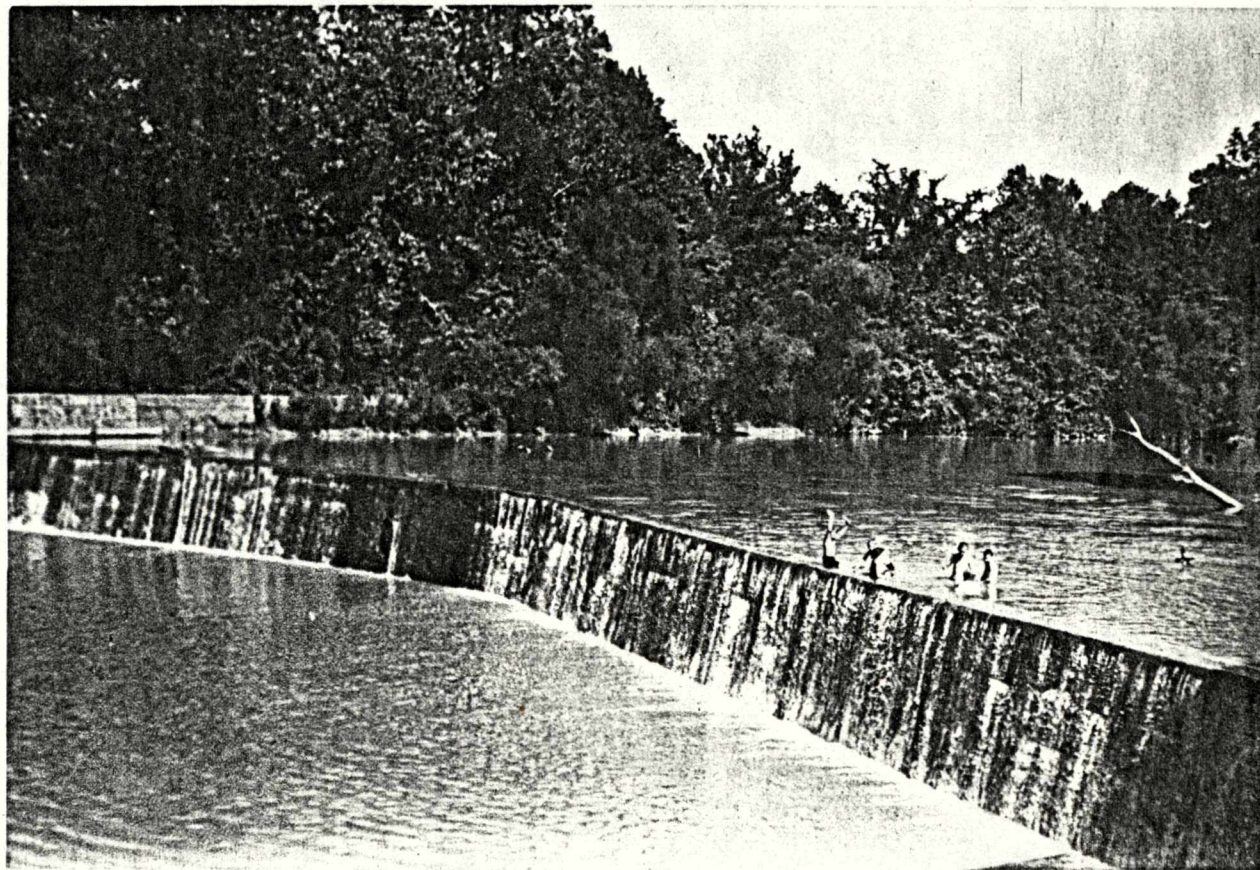


—Mills Archives—CAT

Markle Mill Dam
Otter Creek

Slide made

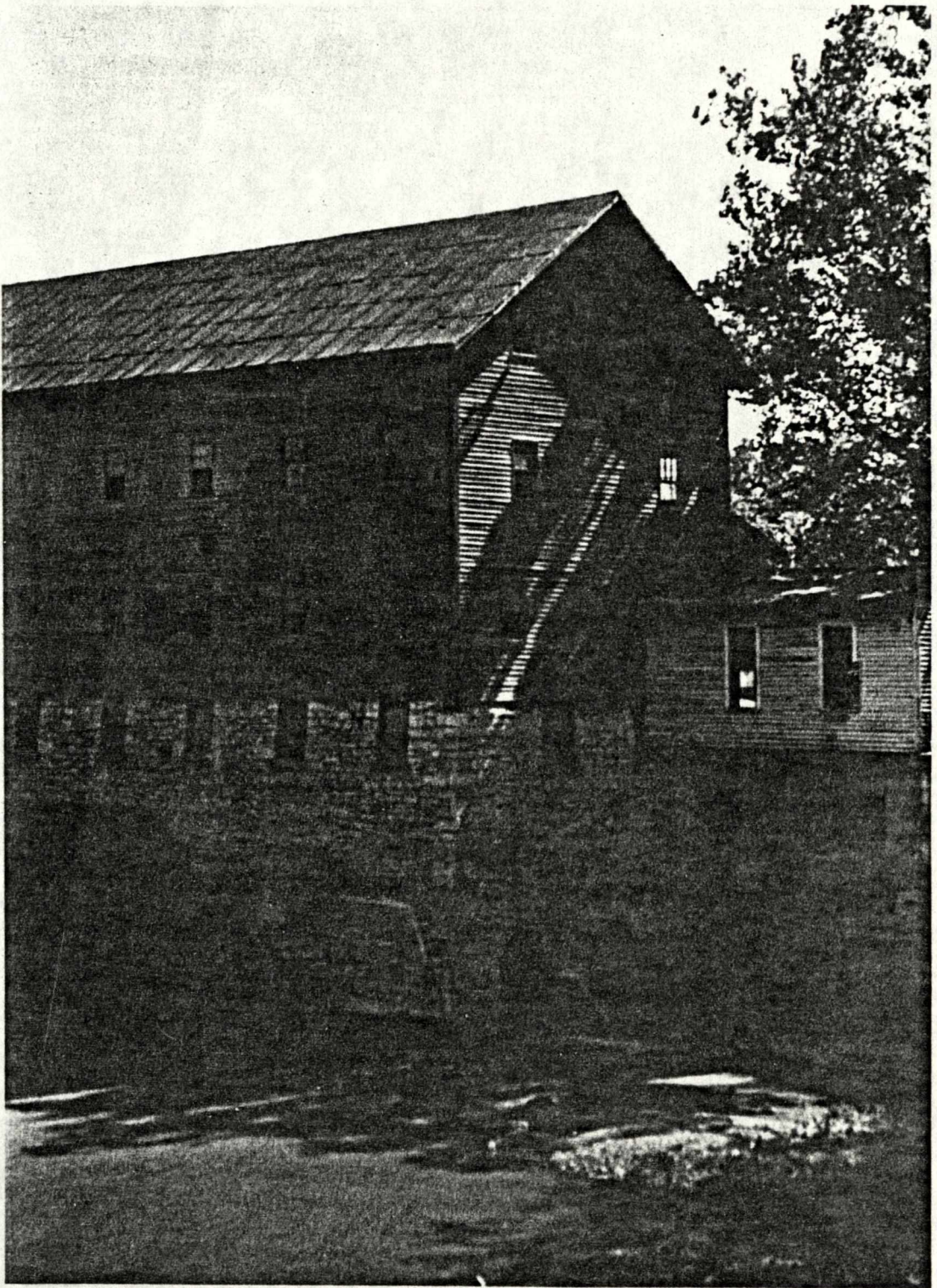
6-10-55



MARKLE MILL DAM

Archives - 6A4

Mills, Ind.



Markle's Mill
(Otter Creek Sup., Vigo Co.)

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

AMERICAN MILLER

May 1, 1926

Mills (Ind.)

485

Markle's Mill on Otter Creek Now A Century Plus A Decade Old

North Terre Haute Plant Officially Designated As Oldest Mill in State Still in Operation—School Children Celebrate Anniversary of Founder

ABRAM MARKLE, soldier, pioneer, adventurer, community builder, erected a mill along with a corn whiskey distillery, on Otter Creek in Vigo County, Indiana, in 1816. His life before and after that date is so full of color and interest that a brief account of the current developments and this mill will be given before the longer account of its early history is set down.

The plant is operated now by C. D. Hansel, who runs the mill three days a week on flour and three days on feed, for since taking over the establishment in 1911, Mr. Hansel has established both these products of his 50-barrel mill in the local market. One of the slogans used in advertising his flour is "Home Made Bread—The Best And Cheapest Food." Two motor trucks are used to speed up

the following units which have replaced the "early American" furnishings of the Nineteenth Century: One grain separator, a scourer, four roll stands, 9 by 14-inch, (three breaks and five reductions), one sifter, one large reel, a purifier, two dust collectors, and one bran duster. Four hand scales weigh out the stock. The plant has storage space for 5,000 bushels of the Soft Winter wheat which it draws from Vigo County.

A Leffel Turbine, Size 23, develops 28 horsepower, more than enough for the mill's needs. The plant is lit by current from the city. The steady flow of Otter Creek has always served the old mill faithfully. In 1864, about the time when dozens of mills in Indiana and bordering states were just being erected, Markle's Mill on Otter Creek was being remodelled after nearly 50 years of operation. The original site was still held, however, on account of the excellent waterpower. Some new timbers were introduced when the plant was remodelled, but it remained virtually the same with 24-foot 12 by 12 posts and 64 4 by 5 black walnut rafters. Just 60 years after the remodelling, the Indiana Historical Society designated the mill as the "oldest mill in the state."

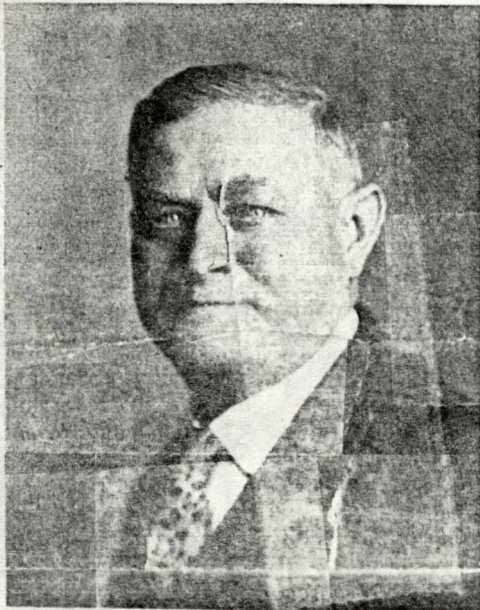
On March 26 of this year, the one-hundredth anniversary of the death of the mill's builder, Abraham Markle, the published record of his life was used as the history lesson in all the schools of

stormy times of the war. Repeatedly incurring the displeasure of the Crown for his utterances favorable to annexation by the United States, and after several futile indictments by the Government, each resulting in his acquittal by the juries of his neighbors, he was finally, under the instructions of the Acting Attorney General, transported down the river for trial by those more disposed to lend their help to the Crown, and on this occasion he made his escape, tradition says, by reason of his Masonic affiliation, crossed the river and joined the army as a volunteer under another fellow member of the Assembly, named Joseph Willcocks.

Enlisting as captain he served as such from December 12, 1813, until his promotion to major, April 19, 1814, receiving official citations for meritorious conduct at Fort Erie, where on the death of Lieutenant Colonel Willcocks, he succeeded to the command. For his service in the army he received the regular pay of such officers, but suffered the confiscation of his Canadian property as an offset. His holdings at the time of his departure from Canada amounted to over 1,500 acres and were valued at more than \$27,000.

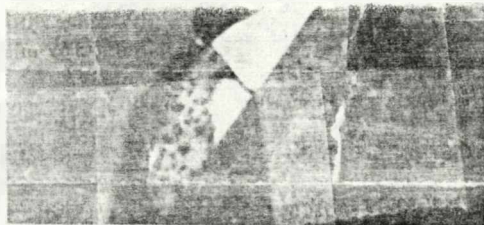
With the close of the war, he and his fellow members faced the prospect of the loss of even the little pay granted in those days to army men and officers and in January, 1816, Abraham Markle's name headed a petition to Congress asking for relief in the way of a grant of land in the Harrison Purchase, that 2,900,000 acre domain out of which Vigo and neighboring counties have been carved; this resulted in grants of land, according to rank, to him and his men.

Major Markle and his associates secured the assignment of many of these claims for land by the payment in immediate cash, in many instances, of



C. D. HANSEL



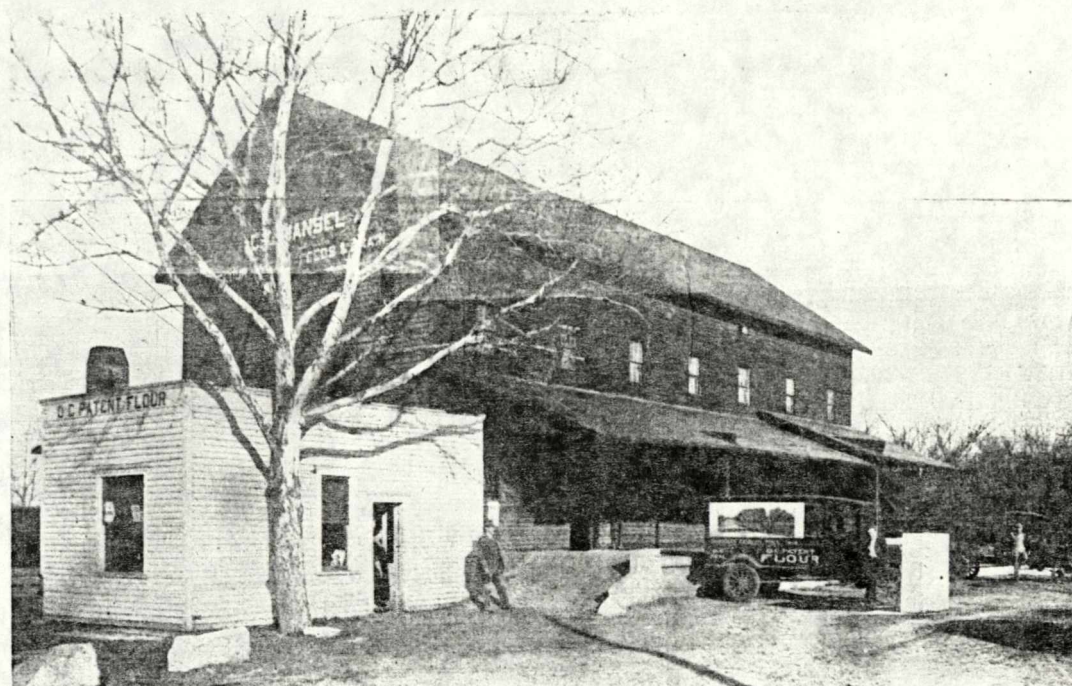


C. D. HANSEL

the delivery of the flour and feed orders. The present owner takes a great interest in the historical feature of his plant, and is always ready to show people through the plant and answer the questions that come thick and fast from all visitors.

Mr. Hansel, starting with capital of but \$350, was forced to rent the mill for four years. In 1915 he bought the place. It was a fortunate transaction. The trade is more alive than ever and is responding heartily to the progressive efforts of the new owner. C. D. Hansel had a varied experience before casting his lot with Indiana's oldest mill. To AMERICAN MILLER readers, he has written the following: "I started in a water mill in 1897 at \$20 per month and board. After getting a home of my own in 1898, I was raised to \$26 per month. From 1899 to 1902 I was in a mill owned and operated by A. H. Nordyke (of the Nordyke & Marmon Company) whom I respected very much. In 1902, Mr. Nordyke decided to make a corn mill of the plant. So when the new manager came on, I was out of a job. Not seeing anything in the future of a miller who had to start all over every few years, I decided to be a coal miner, as that was the best thing in sight. I followed that for nine years when the old mill presented itself. It looked good to me. I rented it, then bought it. Am still grinding the daily grist with the rest of you. I have learned to think much more of the white dust than the black diamond dust."

Head miller at Mr. Hansel's plant is F. A. Coombes. On him rests a good share of the responsibility for the production of uniform stock which is sacked as "OC" Patent Flour. "OC" Corn Meal is also run. There are four floors in the building which rests on a 30 by 70-foot foundation. Well arranged throughout the several floors, are



MARKLE'S MILL AT TERRE HAUTE, IND., NOW OPERATED BY C. D. HANSEL

Vigo County. School children that day, in spite of somewhat inclement weather, marched to his grave and paid their respects to the one who founded their community. Descendants of the Markle line took part in the services.

Abraham Markle was born in Ulster County, New York, October 26, 1770, of Rondout Valley Dutch ancestry, and spent the early part of his life in the midst of that Revolutionary battleground, the Hudson Valley. In common with that restless group of the period which was the source of so many pioneer emigrations to the farther west, we find him in May of 1794, leaving Niagara-on-the-Lake for some unknown destination, bearing the certificate of his good Masonic standing.

His purchase of land in Upper Canada in May, 1806, was followed by others in the same locality and in the next six years, he became a citizen by residence, of sufficient importance to be appointed a member of the Provincial Parliament, where he at once became a prominent figure during the

no more than the extra pay due the men benefitted by the act, and armed with these warrants he crossed the mountains from Central New York where he had collected his family and many friends, built three large flat boats at Olean, N. Y., and embarked for the far west by the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers for the mouth of the Wabash, from which point they poled their boats up the stream to their land of promise.

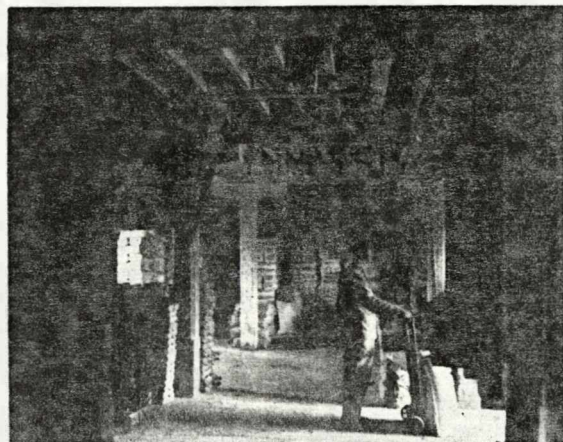
Having entered his land, Major Markle proceeded to make use of it, the first effort being to establish his home and build the mill on Otter Creek, after which he plunged into the task of acquiring more land, carrying on meanwhile his business of milling and distilling. He erected a combined saw mill and grist mill, as well as a distillery. One Indiana historian explains to the school children that the distillery was really necessary for "an outlet for some of the corn raised in such great quantities on the fertile prairies."

Buyers of land from the Government in

AMERICAN MILLER

Fifty-Fourth Year

Markle's time, were obliged to pay for it in gold or silver specie, obtainable in large part only from "down the river," as the territory on the lower Mississippi River was described. For this specie were shipped enormous quantities of corn, either as grain or its transformed substitutes, pork and whiskey. Corn could be shipped only at certain



INTERIOR OF C. D. HANSEL'S MILL

seasons, owing to the climate, pork only for a short season in midwinter, but whiskey commanded a constant market and could be shipped at any time. Flour was another all-the-year-round product for the lower river market, and many entries in the old ledgers testify to the worth of that turned out at the Markle Mill.

Much of the trade naturally, was in barter, pelts, wool, cotton, logs and grain being exchanged for flour, meal, whiskey and lumber, as well as the

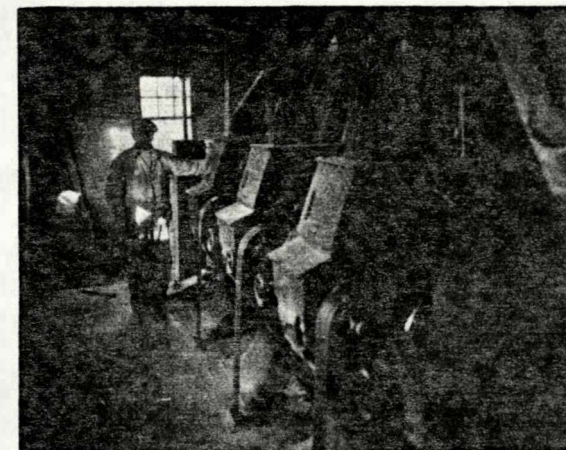
"foreign merchandise" brought to Indiana, on the frontier from the far away outer world.

The early dockets of the Circuit Court of Vigo County are filled with references to Abraham Markle, in many of which, both civil and criminal, he was defendant. Almost the first indictment for gambling was against him, another early case was for assault and battery in which he pleaded justification, and the jury believed him. Another famous case was that of the State vs. Chunn for issuing a challenge to fight a duel, in which after his refusal to fight Major Chunn, the latter's second, Captain Cass, also challenged Major Markle, and after their indictment another series of indictments grew out of the failure or refusal of the constable to arrest the two officers. None of the cases ever came to trial, all the parties being Masons, their friends intervened at last and smoothed matters over so that neither blood nor honor were lost.

The tenth year of the life of Terre Haute found the Major in possession of many acres of the county, much property in the growing town, heavily interested in shipping and manufacturing native products such as flour. All this required money and it is not surprising to learn that he had turned to the most powerful and thrifty community of the day to procure it. At the height of his need he had mortgaged to Frederick Rapp, of the New Harmony community, a large quantity of land for approximately \$6,000, and at his death he still owed a great deal of money, the security being in almost every case, the land of this vicinity. It was in the midst of this activity, that he died suddenly at his home, the story being that he burst a blood vessel in his brain while pulling fence posts on the farm and, as in common with many

others, he had found no time to make his will, the settlement of the estate was badly complicated by reason of the many heirs, partners and debts.

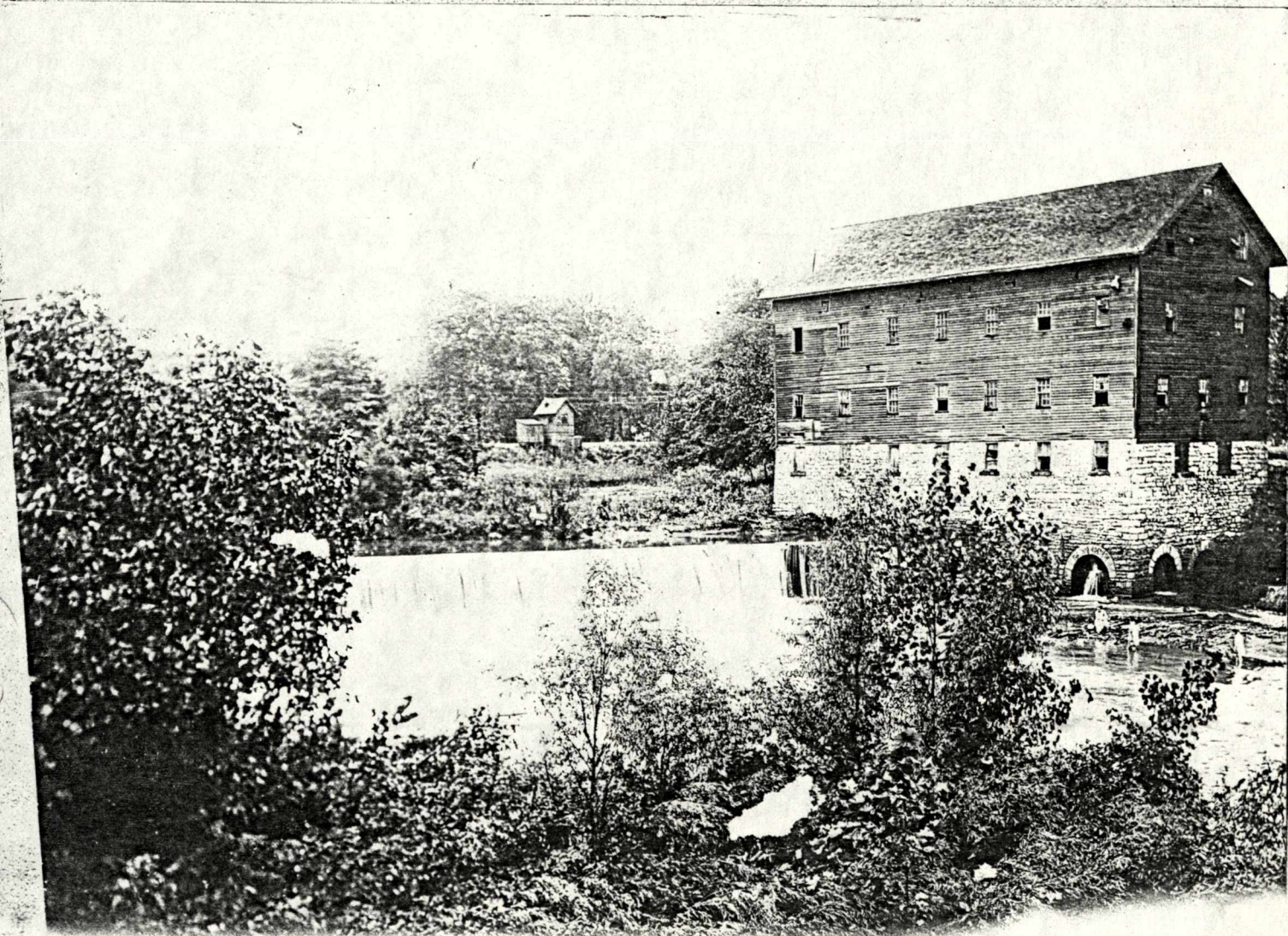
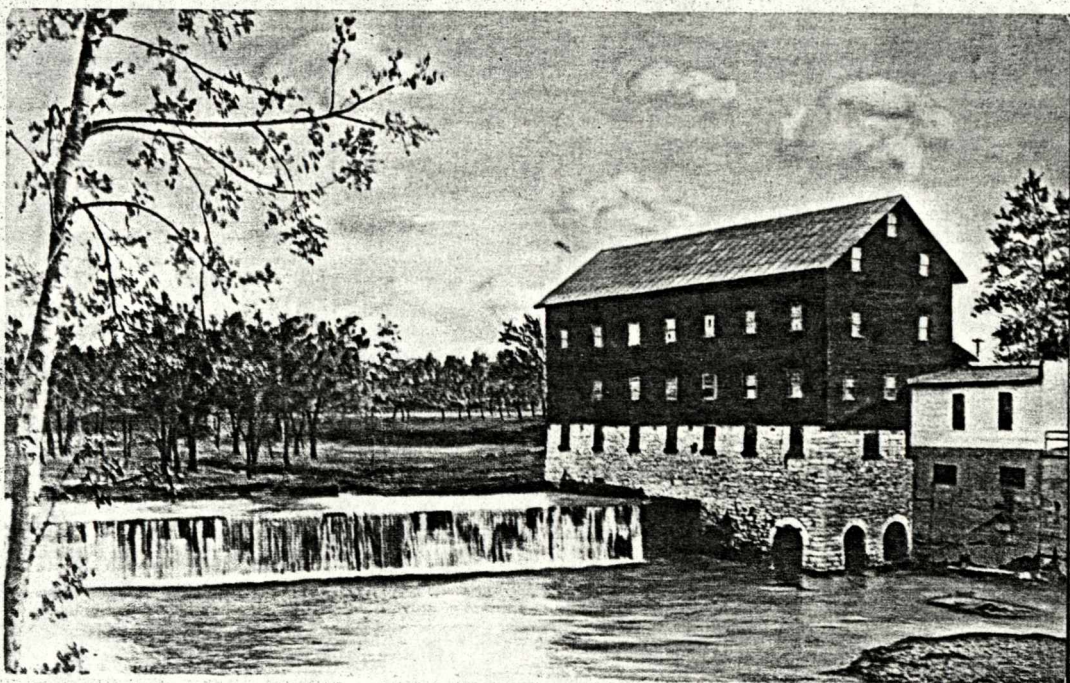
And so after a life full of labor for himself, his family, his friends and the communities in which he lived, there died at his home, in the little house



ROLL STANDS IN MARKLE'S MILL

that still stands at the entrance to the woods now called Forest Park, Major Abraham Markle, one of the pioneers who helped found the town of Terre Haute and the County of Vigo, on the twenty-sixth day of March, 1826, one hundred years ago, in the fifty-sixth year of his life. The burial service was in charge of Masonic Lodge, No. 19, and he was laid to rest in the family burial grounds, where today can be seen the monument to his memory, while around it and around his mill stand other monuments more lasting than stone.

demic men—O. A. Nelson and G. A. Hurlitt, at Prince-
mental
prod-
ditions
from



Mills (Ind.)

Archives - CAT

Historic Markle's Mill, first in Vigo county, was located two miles northeast of Terre Haute, Ind., on Otter Creek. Built 1817 by Abraham Markle, one of original town proprietors, oldest mill west of Alleghenies was destroyed by fire 1938 after 121 years of continuous service, and Underground Railroad stopover.

Pub. by Richard Bruce, 1126 South 20th St., Terre Haute, Ind. 47803

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

Post Card

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

67298-C

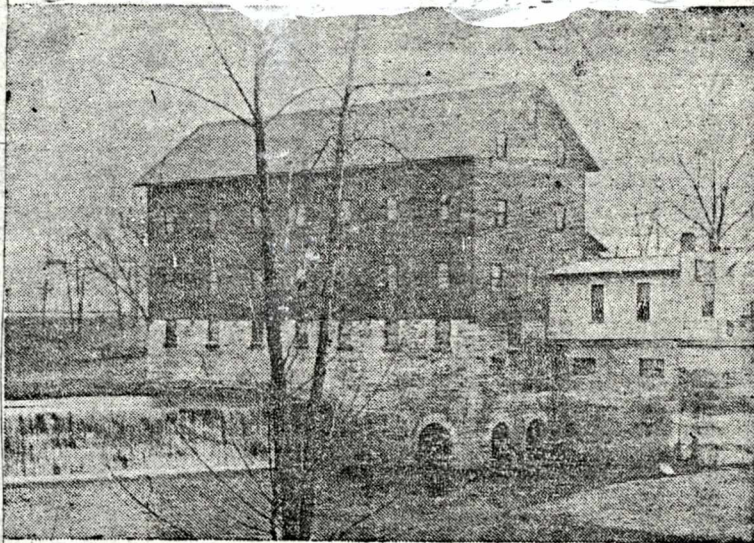
dp MADE BY
DEXTER PRESS, INC.
WEST NYACK, NEW YORK

MILLS (IND.) MARKLE MILL

Community Affairs File
Vigo County Public Library
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

*Markle's Mill
Built 1817
Markle
first in town
located on Otter Creek
destroyed by fire 1938
one of original town proprietors
oldest mill west of Alleghenies
continuous service 121 years
Underground Railroad stopover*

Flames Consume "The Old Mill"



Markle mill at North Terre Haute was burned last night, after a career of 120 years. It was Terre Haute's most interesting landmark.

HISTORIC OLD MILL DESTROYED BY FIRE

Was First Industry of Its Kind Established West of Alleghenies
—Loss Is Extensive.

Fire Tuesday night destroyed the Markle's Mill and storeroom. Famous in the historical lore of Vigo county and the Northwest Territory, the landmark was known as the oldest mill west of the Allegheny mountains.

Several old and valuable antiques stored at the mill, 800 bushels of wheat, 800 bushels of corn, ten tons of mill feed, six tons of cracked corn, 400 barrels of flour and a quantity of hominy and dairy feed was also destroyed by the fire.

The Markle's Mill was so old that it even antedated Vigo county and no court records can be found now regarding its establishment. It was built in 1816 and rebuilt at least once, in 1866 by Frederick Markle, who operated it for two score years. The Hansel Milling Company, C. D. Hansel, manager, owned the mill at the time of the fire.

Before last night's fire the appearance of the mill plainly indicated its age but the structure had been so well built that it seemed to mock the ravages of time and it has for years been one of the historical show places of Vigo county.

The fire was discovered by Samuel Greene of North Terre Haute, a miller, and by Engineer Richard Gosman, also of North Terre Haute. The two were employed on the night shift at the mill. Greene reported that he smelled smoke, started to investigate and that when he tried to enter the upper story of the mill he found it a mass of flames. He returned to the mill office, sounded the alarm and notified Gosman. This was at 9:30 o'clock.

Fire Department Responds.

An appeal for help was made to the Terre Haute fire department and Hose Companies 7 and 8, Assistant Fire Chief Fred McConnell and Mechanic Alsman went to the scene. They found the entire structure in flames.

Two firemen, Frank Kyle of No. 8 and Raymond Taylor of No. 7, narrowly escaped serious injury or death when a large smokestack at the rear of the mill collapsed and fell within a few feet of where they were holding a hose. Chief McConnell saw the stack tottering, warned the two men and they leaped to safety.

The origin of the fire was not definitely determined, but the flames started high in the mill and a short circuit in the wiring was the theory advanced by many. Hundreds of people were attracted to the scene by the fire.

C. D. Hansel of the Hansel Milling Company stated Tuesday night that among the old antiques stored at the mill was a bookcase formerly used by Chauncey Rose. Some of the antiques were carried to safety but the majority of them were destroyed in the fire.

Loss Is Extensive.

Damages will run into thousands of dollars and no attempt to estimate the loss can be given until a complete check can be made.

A. R. Markle, whose interesting accounts of Terre Haute's early days are familiar to Terre Haute newspaper readers, often touched on the history of the mill built by his ancestors.

Markle explained that this territory was a part of Knox county at the time the mill was built. Though it was necessary to obtain a court writ permitting the damming of a stream no such record seems to exist for Markle's mill. The historian feels this was due to the fact that only the federal government at the time owned any of the lands that might be damaged by the damming of the waters. In fact, Major Markle, who built the mill, was the first individual land owner in the Harrison purchase and was the only land owner at the time the mill was built.

ALSO SEE FILE: MILLS (IND)
Markle Mill

From the earliest times Markle's mill and other early water-powered mills were regarded as public utilities and were rigidly regulated as to terms and prices and were subject to established rules of conduct regarding the treatment of customers. Elaborate pains were taken in those days to insure that a customer obtained flour actually produced from the wheat he brought to the mill, a practice that long since has passed—even at Markle's mill, which daily ground its grist up until the time of the fire.

Markle Mill Fire Anniversary Marked

Community Affairs File

Northside Journal
by Judy Stedman Calvert

9-14-82

Forty-four years ago on September 20, 1938, Vigo County lost one of its oldest landmarks when the Markle Mill, east of North Terre Haute, was destroyed by fire.

At the time of the fire, the mill was the oldest mill in the United States west of the Allegheny Mountains still in operation. It was built in 1816 by Ezra Jones for Abraham Markle, one of the early pioneers in Vigo County.

Markle chose the mill site on Otter Creek because of the rocky bottom of the creek. This proved to be a contributing factor to the stability of the structure. Mills built earlier or about the same time on Honey Creek on sandy bottoms were doomed to be washed away by floods and high waters.

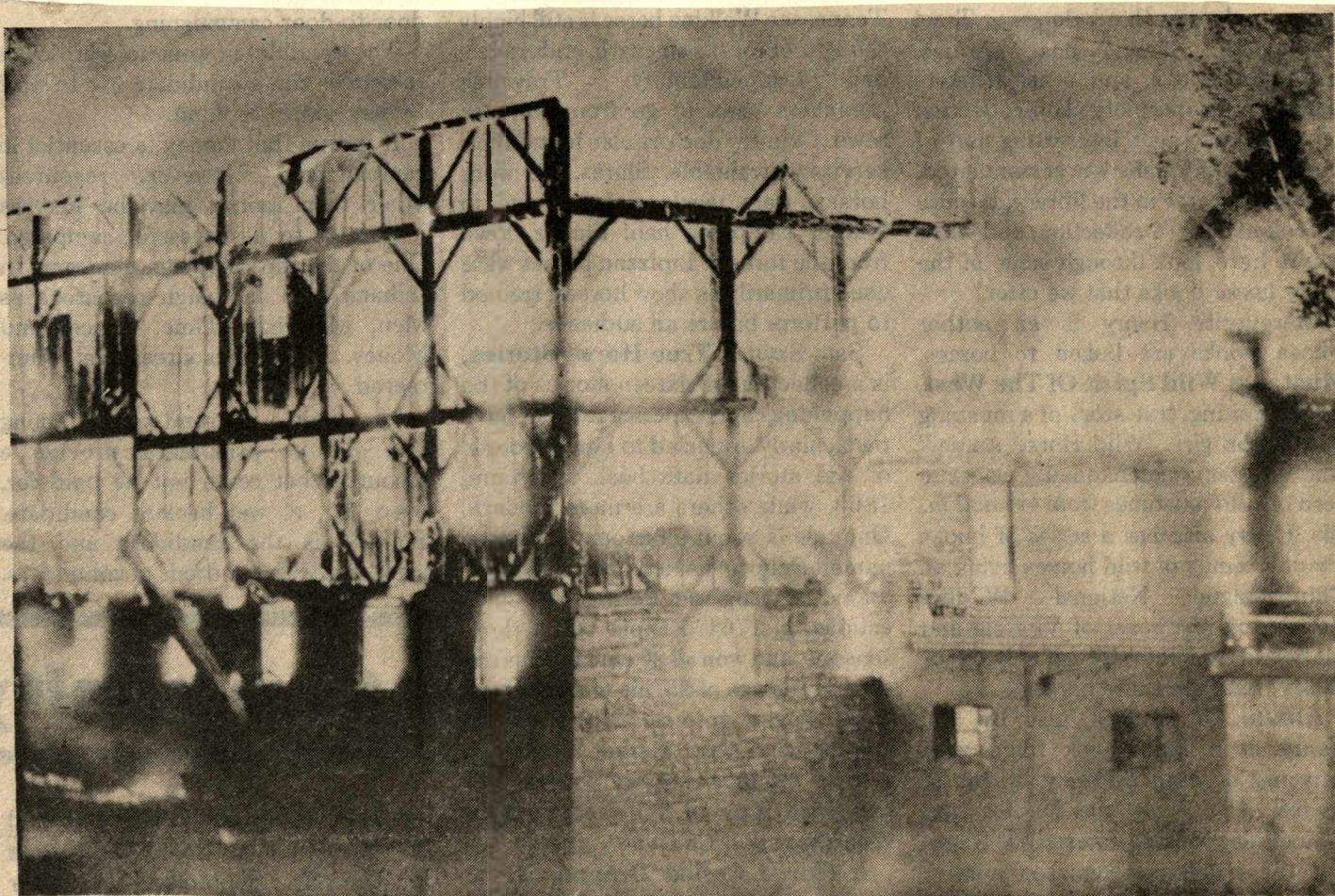
Markle's sons and a grandson operated the mill for many years until it was sold to Mr. Creal of Burnett. Later Mr. Welch bought the mill. C. D. Hansel leased the mill in 1911 and later purchased it. He was the owner when the fire occurred.

Originally the dam on Otter Creek was made of logs, but it was later cemented over. It is still in existence.

Today only parts of the foundation of the mill remain and a park is maintained at the mill site by Otter Creek Township.

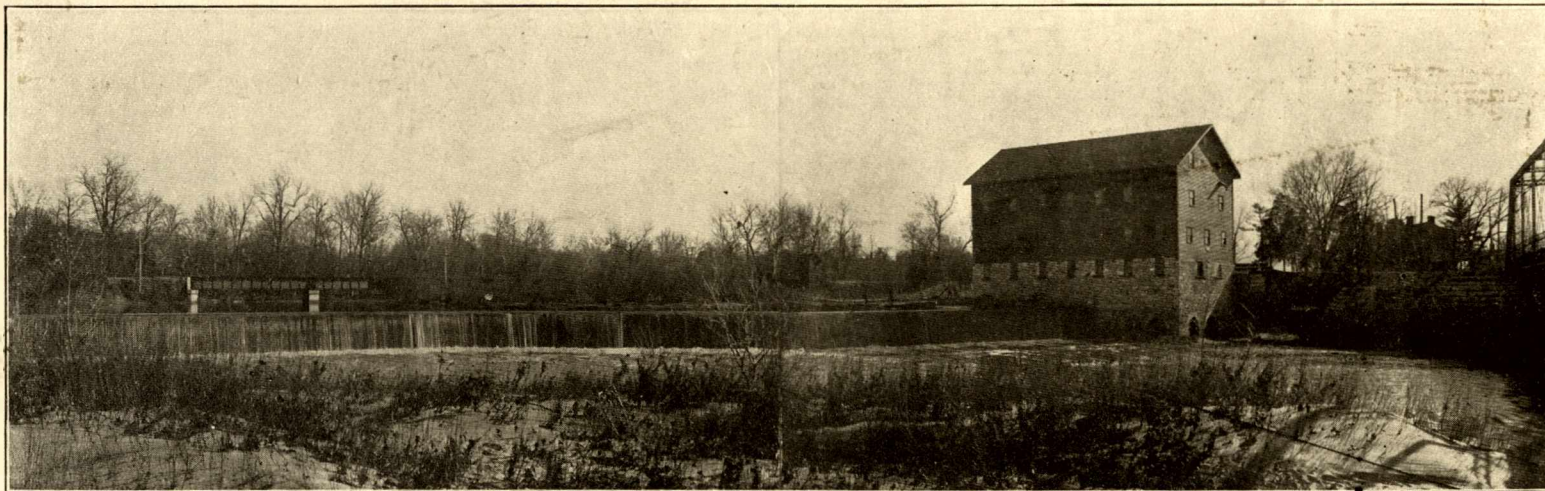
Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE



INDIANA ROOM

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE



MARKLE'S MILL 1816-1923, 107 YEARS

This old mill built on Otter Creek, five miles north east of Terre Haute was built by Major Abraham Markle; it began to grind in 1817, and is still busy with its daily grist. The mill is now owned by Charles D. Hansel of 2401 North Ninth St., Terre Haute, Ind.

Presented by the Vigo County Historical Society, October 25, 1923

TERRE HAUTE FIRST NATIONAL BANK HISTORY ARTICLE SERIES

MARKLE'S MILL DAM

In the eastern part of Otter Creek Township lies one of the most historic landmarks of this state, Markle's Mill Dam.

In pioneer Indiana towns grew up around a grist mill. No matter what the economy might have been, the grist mill was a necessity. Farmers traveled from miles around to have their grain ground at the mill. Along with the crossroads, the tavern, the ford or bridge; the mill became the rallying point for a widely scattered population.

A successful miller in northern New York and Canada, Major Abraham Markle selected his mill site east of Fort Harrison in 1816. Since Markle was one of Terre Haute's founders, he urged settlers to buy lots and settle in the growing little town located on the river bank southwest of the mill.

Markle chose the mill site on Otter Creek because of the rocky bottom of the creek. This proved to be a contributing factor to the stability of the structure. Mills built earlier or about the same time on Honey Creek on sandy bottoms were doomed to be washed away by floods and high waters.

Markle's mill was constructed of stone for added strength. As the mill prospered a saw mill was added, along with a blacksmith shop, distillery, and general store. The mill began producing flour in 1817, and in 1848 the majestic Markle House was built.

The mill and home served as a station on the Underground Railroad, helping slaves escape to the North and Canada, as a community center, and as a recruiting station in the Civil War. They served as a meeting place for the "Home Guard" during the Civil War and as a Way Station for stage coach lines.

From the earliest times Markle's mill and other early water-powered mills were regarded as public utilities and were rigidly regulated as to terms and prices. Elaborate pains were taken in those days to insure that a customer obtained flour actually produced from wheat he brought to the mill.

Markle's sons and a grandson operated the mill for many years until it was sold to a man named Creal, of Burnett. Later a man by the name of Welch bought the mill, and in 1911 C.D. Hansel leased the mill and later purchased it.

Major Markle died in 1826 at the early age of 56, so he did not live long enough to see the growth of Terre Haute and what was to become the slow demise of his mill. In 1938 a devastating fire destroyed the mill as it was known then. At the time Markle's mill was the oldest mill west of the Allegheny Mountains still in operation. Later vandalism and weather took an especially heavy toll on the dam.

In 1983 Markle's mill dam was the object of a restoration effort. Students at Terre Haute North High School saw the need for repair. Standing ten feet high, the dam held the water table up all the way down the river. If the crumbling of the dam continued, Vigo County would eventually lose the dam. Restoration work involved rerouting the water path by digging out the old route the water used to follow before the mill burned down.

In its existence the dam has created an ecology upstream dependent on current water level. It sustained a wildlife preserve. The area east of the dam is on the flight path of some migratory birds. Reasons for saving Markle's dam were obvious, as a lowering of the water level might change the vegetation which would result in the loss of food for wildlife.

Markle's mill dam is located on Park Avenue about a mile east of Lafayette Avenue in northeastern Vigo County. Today only parts of the foundation of the mill remain and a park is maintained at the mill site by Otter Creek Township.

Markles Mill. 1816-1923, 107 years.

This old mill, commenced by Major Abraham Markle in 1816, began to grind grain in 1817. The mill is still at work grinding its daily grist. Generations have come and generations have gone but the faithful old mill continues its daily task. Without doubt it is the oldest mill in Indiana. The oldest institutions in Vigo county were the homes of its squatter settlers. No land could be legally owned in Vigo County before June, 1, 1816, for on that day the proclamation of President Madison opened certain additional lands in the Northwest Territory for settlement. The second oldest institution in Vigo County was Fort Harrison, built in 1812.

The builder of this ancient mill must have his share of claim to fame. Major Abraham Markle was born in 1769 in western New York of an old Dutch family. Early in life he learned the trade of a millwright. He was saturated with the instincts of thrift, bequests from his Dutch ancestors. He built a mill, operated it, sold it and repeated the process. Southern Canada was then a good prospect for promoters. Major Markle crossed over to the Province of Ontario, bought lands, built mills, operated the mills, sold them and continued to accumulate property. He was popular with the people in Canada. They elected him to the Canadian Parliament. He took the oath of allegiance to George III, King of England. The War of 1812 came on. Major Markle accepted a commission as a Major in the United States Army. Both of his commissions are in Vigo County. Tradition says that the Major led a New York regiment against the Canadians and that his regiment was captured. The Major stood on his rights as a

INDIANA ROOM

DO NOT CIRCULATE
REFERENCE

prisoner of war. The Canadians asserted their prerogatives and tried him immediately by courtmartial, on the charge of treason. The trial was brief, the verdict, "Guilty" the sentence, "To be shot before sunrise next morning."

But Major Markle, sagacious and intrepid, was not to meet a traitor's doom. When sunrise overtook him he was on this side of the river! His property and holdings in Canada were immediately confiscated to the Crown. Backed by Governor Brown of New York and by James Monroe, then secretary of War in President Madison's cabinet, the Major appealed to the United States Congress for redress of grievances. Markle knew that the United States was richer in lands than in money. It was lands that he wanted. He knew how to build mills and develop new territory. Most of the historical conditions favored his ambitions.

The flag of France fell in North America at Quebec in 1759. George III became King in 1760. He was perhaps the most important figure in British constitutional development in the 18th century. His theory of government was that he should rule by proclamation through a constitution. Soon after he ascended the throne of England he issued a proclamation that no more land in the Northwest Territory should be occupied by white settlers; that the Indians and the wild animals should be permitted to live unmolested. This set up the so called Proclamation Line of 1763, which followed the rest of the Appalachians. At the peace table in Paris in 1783 the American commissioners were asked to sign an agreement that this territory should be left to the Indians, as neutral ground. The Indians were the King's faithful allies. Tecumseh, as much of a statesman as any Indian ever became, a born leader of his tribesmen received a commission as a major general in the British Army. His brother the so called prophet was placed

on the pension roll of the British Government and remained there until 1826, six years after the death of George III. This Indian alliance made it possible to enforce the King's proclamation against white settlers for more than 50 years.

It was the opening and unlocking of this territory that Major Markle planned and for which he plead. The Canadian relief bill was the answer that Congress made to his petition. Though by no means the first settler in this country, he was alert enough to secure land warrant number 1, and thus become the first land owner. His well trained eye saw the capabilities of Otter Creek as a mill site and the present location of Terre Haute as a town site.

Major Markle was rich in those endowments that constitute leadership, he was a natural leader of men. Few men's names appear on as many land entries as that of Major Markle. The records of his achievements as a promoter, as a leader in the opening and improvement of the Wabash Valley are in existence and should become the property of the city and be deposited in the public library. The old mill, the Markle homestead and much of the lands adjoining should become a public park and a credible monument should be erected to his memory. He died in March, 1826 and lies buried in the Markle cemetery. It is not to the credit of this community that the name and achievements of Major Markle have been permitted to sleep in such obscurity and the Vigo County Historical Society is doing much to fulfill its purpose in rescuing from oblivion the perishing memories of this great character.